

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NICOSI 00927 091939Z

43

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SUBJ: CLERIDES RESIGNATION: ASSESSMENT AND CONSEQUENCES

REF: (A) NICOSIA 0926 (DTG 091550Z APR 76), (B) NICOSIA 0921 (DTG 091405Z APR 76), (C) NICOSIA 0911 (DTG 081745Z APR 76), (D) NICOSIA 0906 (DTG 081150Z APR 76), (E) NICOSIA 0628 (DTG 101046Z MAR 76), (F) NICOSIA 0553 (DTG 021500Z MAR 76)

1. FROM SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS OVER PAST TWO DAYS WE HAVE BEEN PULLIN

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TOGETHER THE THREADS OF THE CLERIDES RESIGNATION STORY. THIS MESSAGE

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PAGE 02 NICOSI 00927 091939Z

CONVEYS OUR VIEWS AND ASSESSMENT OF IMPLICATIONS.

2. AS DEPT IS AWARE (REF F), CLERIDES AGREE DURING FIFTH ROUND IN VIENNA TO A TWO-TIER APPROACH ON EXCHANGE OF TERRITORIAL PROPOSALS, COMMON LINE FOR PUBLIC USE WAS THAT WHICHEVER SIDE WAS READY FIRST WOULD CONVEY ITS PROPOSAL. PRIVATELY, IT WAS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT GREEK SIDE WOULD MOVE FIRST WITH DENKTASH THEN HAVING TEN DAYS TO RESPOND. FROM ALL AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, IT APPEARS THAT CLERIDES DID NOT TELL BITSIOS OR MAKARIOS ABOUT THE PRIVATE AGREEMENT. FROM CLERIDES (REF E) WE KNOW THAT HE INTENDED SECRETLY TO USE HUMANITARIAN TALKS WITH DENKTASH TO WARN HIM IN ADVANCE OF THE SHAPE OF GREEK PROPOSAL, CUSHION ITS IMPACT AND ENGAGE IN A REAL CONFIDENTIAL GIVE-AND-TAKE ON TERRITORIAL PROPOSALS. I SO DOING HE RAN A FRIGHTFUL BUT COURAGEIOUS DUEL RISK: (A) THAT MAKARIOS WOULD DISCOVER WHAT HE WAS UP TO, AND (B) THAT DENKTASH WOULD NOT RESPECT HIS CONFIDENCE. HE LOST ON BOTH COUNTS.

3. ALWAYS SUSPICIOUS, MAKARIOS, UNBEKNOWNST TO CLERIDES, HAD HIS AMBASSADOR IN NEW YORK QUERY WALDHEIM ON THE DETAILS OF VIENNA UNDERSTANDING ON THIS POINT. THUS, EARLY ON, MAKARIOS KNEW THAT CLERIDES WAS HOLDING OUT ON HIM. DENKTASH REFUSED TO PLAY AND (A) IMMEDIATELY LEAKED PREVIEW OF GREEK PROPOSAL WHICH CLERIDES GAVE HIM ON MARCH 24 AND (B) CHARGED CLERIDES WITH VIOLATION OF VIENNA COMMITMENT WHEN FINAL GREEK TEXT WAS DELIVERED TO DE CUELLAR APRIL 3 WITH THE ACCOMPANYING REQUEST THAT IT NOT BE GIVEN TO DENKTASH UNTIL LATTER HANDED IN HIS SIDE'S PROPOSAL. WHEN DE CUELLAR SAW MAKARIOS TO TELL HIM THAT UNDER VIENNA UNDERSTANDING HE COULD NOT DELAY DELIVERY OF GREEK TEXT. MAKARIOS FORCED HIM TO CONFIRM THE EXISTENCE OF THE TWO-TIER FORMULA. CONFRONTED WITH THIS FIRST BY MAKARIOS AND LATER IN A JOINT SESSION OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL/COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, CLERIDES HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO RESIGN. AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, NO ONE DISAGREED.

4. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (REF A), THERE IS GOOD REASON TO THINK THAT MAKARIOS HAS FOR SOME TIME WANTED A GOOD PRETEXT TO GET CLERIDES OUT OF THE NEGOTIATING ROLE. TO HIS INTIMATES HE HAS CHARACTERIZED CLERIDES AS TOO SOFT AND PRONE TO DISREGARD INSTRUCTIONS. WE THINK HIS REAL REASON HAS BEEN CUMULATIVE RESENTMENT OF WORLD VIEW OF CLERIDES AS THE INDISPENSABLE, REALISTIC AND MODERATE NEGOTIATOR AND LEADER.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 NICOSI 00927 091939Z

5. WHY DENKTASH CHOSE TO PULL THE PLUG ON CLERIDES IS SOMEWHAT MORE OBSCURE. BUT, AGAIN, THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT HE AND GOT MAY HAVE DECIDED THAT THEY WOULD BE BETTER OFF WITH CLERIDES OUT OF THE PICTURE AT LEAST AT THIS STAGE. FOR THE TURKS, CLERIDES'S INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION FOR REASONABLENESS CONTRASTED UNFAVORABLY WITH THEIR IMAGE IN THE CYPRIOT SITUATION. TURKS HAVE EVINCED A TENDENCY TO BELIEVE THAT WITH CLERIDES OUT OF THE PICTURE MAKARIOS CAN BE SHOWN UP AS THE INTRANSIGENT, HYPOCRITICAL LEADER THAT

BELIEVE HIM TO BE.

6. THUS, WHAT SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN AT WORK HERE IS AN IRONIC CONJUNCTION OF INTERESTS OF MAKARIOS AND TURKS.

7. AS TO THE CONSEQUENCES: CLERIDES HAS NOW BEEN OFFICIALLY REPLACED BY HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DEPUTY PRESIDENT TASSOS PAPADOPOULOS. PAPADOPOULOS IS ARTICULATE AND CANNY BUT (SO FAR IN HIS CAREER AT ANY RATE) COMPLETELY SUBSERVIENT TO MAKARIOS AND RABIDLY NATIONALISTIC

AND NEGATIVE IN HIS APPROACH TO TURKS. DENKTASH HAS NOW MADE IT OFFICIAL THAT HE WILL NOT NEGOTIATE WITH PAPADOPOULOS BECAUSE OF DIFFERENCE IN RANK. THE TURKS SEEM TO HAVE FOUR CHOICES AS A REPLACEMENT: "MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS "CHELIK, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PRESIDENT UMIT SULEIMAN, DEFENSE MINISTER OREK, OR SUPREME COURT JUSTICE MUNIR. OF THESE, SULEIMAN WOULD BE THE BEST, BUT ALL FOUR ARE GREATLY INFERIOR TO DENKTASH AND HAVE ZERO INDEPENDENCE OF DENKTASH AND BEHIND HIM THEY GOT. THEREFORE, THE MOST HOPEFUL SINGLE ELEMENT IN THE PRESENT NEGOTIATION, THE LONG STANDING FRIENDSHIP AND MUTUAL AWARENESS BETWEEN CLERIDES AND DENKTASH, HAS RUPTURED. THE NEW NEGOTIATORS WILL BE PRONE TO EXAGGERATE DIFFERENCES AND REINFORCE THE MANY EXISTING NEGATIVE FACTORS IN THE SITUATION.

8. SITUATION, IT SHOULD BE NOTED, IS ALREADY QUITE NEGATIVE ENOUGH WITH DENKTASH HAVING FLATLY REJECTED GREEK TERRITORIAL PROPOSAL UNLESS IT IS AMENDED AND GREEK NOW PUBLICLY COMMITTED AGAINST ANY AMENDMENT.

9. THE CLERIDES DEVELOPMENT HAS PROFOUNDLY DISTURBING IMPLICATIONS THAT GO BEYOND THE NEGOTIATION AND INVOLVE THE INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION IN GREEK CYPRUS. ALTHOUGH OWING LARGELY TO HIS ROLE AS NEGOTIATOR, CLERIDES HAS NOT RECENTLY PLAYED CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 NICOSI 00927 091939Z

AS ACTIVE A POLITICAL LEADERSHIP ROLE AS HE AND HIS SUPPORTERS COULD WISH (AND THE SITUATION NECESSITATES), HE WAS STILL THE UNDISPUTED LEADER OF THE GREEK CYPRIOT POLITICAL CENTER. HIS REPUTATION HAS NOW BEEN GRIEVOUSLY DAMAGED. WITH THE CENTER ESSENTIALLY

LEADERLESS, THE EXTREMES OF LEFT AND RIGHT WILL PROFIT AT THE EXPENSE OF POLITICAL MODERATION AND THUS, ALSO, A MEANINGFUL CYPRUS NEGOTIATION, THE PROCESS ITSELF HAVING BEEN FURTHER DISCREDITED WITH THE FALL OF THE NEGOTIATOR. THIS IS NOT TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT NEGOTIATION WILL NECESSARILY CEASE. WE SEE IT AS POLITICALLY EXPEDIENT FOR BOTH MAKARIOS AND TURKEY TO CONTINUE EVEN IF IT IS A DIALOGUE OF THE DEAF.
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